



Department of Justice

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CROSS-COUNTRY DRUG TRAFFICKER RECEIVES LIFE SENTENCE

DAYTON – Ronald Taylor, age 47, a Los Angeles, California man convicted in September, 2006 of supplying hundreds of kilograms of cocaine to the Miami Valley, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to life imprisonment. Taylor had organized a nationwide cocaine distribution organization that distributed thousands of kilos of cocaine to cities including New York, Washington, DC, Detroit, Buffalo, Nashville, Milwaukee, Columbus and Dayton.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Timothy P. Murphy, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cincinnati Field Division; and Cromwell A. Handy, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation announced the sentence handed down today by Senior United States District Judge Walter H. Rice.

“Law enforcement agents and officers across the country worked hard to make Dayton the end of the road for this drug dealer,” Lockhart said, noting that the investigation involved Dayton-based FBI agents, as well as agents from California to the District of Columbia.

After a trial that began on July 31, a United States District Court jury convicted Taylor of one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 150 kilograms of cocaine over two years. The jury also convicted Taylor of operating a continuing criminal enterprise.

Testimony presented at trial showed that Taylor and co-defendant Richard Auston conspired to bring large quantities of cocaine into the Dayton area from California starting in September 1999 when Taylor and others bought a van and had a hidden compartment installed in order to transport the cocaine from California and the money from Dayton.

“About every two months, Taylor and Auston would arrange for multiple kilogram quantities of cocaine to be sent from California to Dayton for distribution, with the largest shipment being 63 kilograms in March, 2001,” Lockhart said. “These men were responsible for poisoning many Dayton streets with cocaine.”

Taylor was arrested in Los Angeles on July 2, 2001 by the FBI and California state law enforcement officials. They seized approximately 50 kilograms of cocaine at the time of the arrest.

Investigation by the FBI and IRS led to Taylor and Auston's indictment in November, 2004.

The jury convicted Auston of one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 150 kilograms of cocaine from September 1999 to July 31, 2001. He faces from ten years to life imprisonment and a fine of up to \$4 million. Auston was also convicted of one count of Interstate Travel in Furtherance of Illegal Activity. He faces 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on that count. Auston is scheduled to be sentenced on April 2, 2007.

Lockhart commended the cooperative efforts of the FBI and IRS Criminal Investigation and also expressed appreciation to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the San Bernardino, California police department who were involved in the investigation and provided key testimony. The Nebraska Highway Patrol also provided assistance when they made an arrest and seized a shipment of 41 kilos of cocaine used in this case. Lockhart also commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Dwight Keller and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Bob Bartlemay who tried the case.

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